

R E M A R K S

Attorney for applicant acknowledges the March 14, 2002 interview between him and Examiner Fox. No agreement was reached at the interview. At the interview, attorney for applicant said amendments will be made to independent claims 15 and 16. However, Examiner Fox said the proposed amendments would not be entered because they raise new issues. Attorney for applicant does not agree the proposed amendments would have raised new issues, and has decided the rejection of all claims as being vague and indefinite under 35 USC 112, ¶2 is incorrect and should be traversed. Since the proposed amendments were primarily to placate Examiner Fox and Examiner Fox said the proposed amendments would not be entered, attorney for applicant can see no reason to submit them. Applicant submits a slight amendment to claim 15, to correct an obvious typographical error. Before discussing the impropriety of the rejection of all claims under 35 USC 112, ¶2, attorney for applicant will consider some housekeeping matters.

On December 13, 2002, attorney for applicant submitted a Request For Approval of Drawing Amendment which Examiner Fox did not acknowledge. Examiner Fox is requested to indicate whether the proposed drawing amendment, which merely involves insertion and clarification of reference numerals, is approved or denied.

Examiner Fox's assertion that the tapered sealing element recited in the claims is not shown in the drawing is incorrect. Shut-off surfaces 48 and 49 on sealing

element 45 are tapered. In this regard, *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Third edition, 1992, page 1835 (copy enclosed) defines "tapered" as "to become gradually narrower or thinner toward one end." Clearly, shut-off surfaces 48 and 49, Figure 2, become gradually narrower or thinner at the ends of sealing element 45 relative to the center portion of the sealing element. Consequently, withdrawal of the objection to the drawing under 37 CFR 1.83(a) is in order.

Initially, attorney for applicant will consider the alleged vague and indefinite aspects of claims 17 and 29, the first 27 lines of which are identical. Most of the criticism of these claims is because of lack of antecedent basis. *The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure*, Section 2173.05(e), states:

Obviously, however, the failure to provide explicit antecedent basis for terms does not always render a claim indefinite. If the scope of a claim would be reasonably ascertainable by those skilled in the art, then the claim is not indefinite. *Ex parte Porter*, 25 USPQ 2d 1144, 1145 (Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, 1992). ('Controlled stream of fluid' provided reasonable antecedent basis for 'the controlled fluid.') Inherent components of elements recited have antecedent basis in the recitation of the components themselves. For example, the limitation 'the outer surface of said sphere' would not require an antecedent recitation that the sphere has an outer surface.

Bearing the foregoing in mind, an analysis of claims 15, 16, 17 and 29 reveals they have proper antecedent basis.

The recitation in claims 17 and 29 of "the inlet and outlet ports" in lines 3 and 4 refers back to "an inlet port" and "an outlet port" in lines 1 and 2. Since all passages inherently have an interior surface and lines 2 and 3 of claims 17 and 29 recite "a

passage," there is no need to recite specifically the interior surface; see the example set forth in the previously quoted portion of Section 2173.05(e) of *The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure*. The recitation in line 17 of claims 17 and 29, lines 13 and 14 of each of these claims is "the sealing element including a tapered peripheral surface." Lines 15-17 of these claims further recite "portions of the peripheral surface being sized and arranged for selectively engaging portions of the passage interior surface to form the seal." It is clear from the quoted language in lines 13 and 14 in combination with the quoted language in lines 15-17 that there is antecedent basis for "the tapered sealing surface" in line 17 because the scope of the claim is reasonably ascertainable by those skilled in the art, which is what Section 2173.05(e) of *The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure* requires. In the specific embodiment illustrated and described in the present specification, the sealing element bears reference numeral 45 and the tapered peripheral sealing surface of claims 17 and 29 bears reference numeral 48. The recitation in claims 17 and 29 and lines 19 and 20 of "the sealing element sealing surface" also obviously refers to the same tapered sealing element peripheral surface that selectively engages portions of the passage interior surface to form the seal, *i.e.*, sealing surface 47 of sealing element 45 in the specific embodiment.

The allegation that the recitation in lines 10-13 of claims 17 and 29 of "(b) a second...outlet ports" is inaccurate and indefinite because "it calls for the sealing element to seal both seats in one position" is incorrect. The entire recitation in lines

10-13 of claims 17 and 29 is "(b) a second position relative to the passage along the axis the sealing element engages a portion of the passage interior surface to form a seal between the inlet and outlet ports...." In the specific embodiment, when sealing element 45 is at the first position recited in lines 7-10 of claims 17 and 29, the sealing element is at the position illustrated in Fig. 2, such that fluid can flow from inlet 22 to outlet 23. In this first position, sealing element 45 is disengaged from the interior surface of the passage between inlet 22 and outlet 23. In the second position recited in claims 17 and 29, sealing element 45 engages the portion of the passage interior surface indicated by sealing surfaces 80 (see drawing amendment request submitted December 13, 2001) and 84, as well as step 87 so that the flow between inlet 22 and outlet 23 is blocked to form a seal between the inlet and outlet ports. Consequently, the Examiner's assertion that claims 17 and 29 call for the sealing element to seal both seats in one position is incorrect.

The Examiner's assertion that the recitation in claim 16 of "the sealing element assigned to seal the first outlet" suggests there is more than one sealing element is wrong. Only one sealing element is defined in claim 16 and disclosed in the application, *i.e.*, sealing element 45. The Examiner is reading something into the claim that has no basis in the claim or in the specification. The words "the sealing element assigned to seal the first outlet" in claim 16 clearly have the same meaning as "the sealing element being arranged to seal the first outlet." If the Examiner wants to

change the word "assigned" to --being arranged--, he is authorized to make such a change by Examiner's Amendment.

The Examiner's allegation that lines 9-11 of claim 16 are inaccurate and indefinite by requiring the sealing element to rest "on opposing shut-off surfaces of a valve seat of the valve body to form an annular sealing surface" is incorrect. In the specifically disclosed embodiment, the opposing shut-off surfaces are illustrated in Fig. 2 as being the surfaces of valve seat 36 that are above and below axis 51 and which are engaged by surface 48 of sealing element 45. Hence, claim 16, lines 9-11, do not call "for the sealing element to rest on both seats in one position," as alleged in the Office Action.

Claim 15 has been amended to obviate a clerical-type error and indicate more clearly that the shut-off surfaces are at a free end of an actuator. A careful reading of claim 15 as submitted in the last Amendment and consideration of the specification and drawing of the application as filed clearly indicate the shut-off surfaces are at the actuator free end. In this regard, page 4, line 39 of the application as filed states "sealing element 45 attached to the free end 62 of the valve tappet 50;" and page 4, lines 15 and 16 of the application as filed state "spherical sealing element 45 is affixed to the actuator designed as a valve tappet." Hence, no other possible meaning can be associated with the phrase in claim 15 that recites "the shut-off surfaces respectively associated with the outlets being arranged to face away from each other, being at a

free end of an actuator." Consequently, inserting the word --and-- between "other," and "being" does not raise new issues nor require a new search. Entry of the amendment inserting the word --and-- between "other," and "being" is thus in order.

The allegation in the Office Action that there is insufficient antecedent basis for "the opposing shut-off surfaces of the valve body" in lines 8 and 9 of claim 15 is erroneous when one considers the previously mentioned comments in *The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure*. Claim 15, lines 6-8 recite "the shut-off surfaces respectively associated with the outlets being arranged to face away from each other." Lines 4 and 5 of claim 15 recite "the sealing element including shut-off surfaces for alternately shutting off the outlets." Hence, the shut-off surfaces recited in lines 6-8, as well as lines 8 and 9, are clearly recited as being on the sealing element. One of ordinary skill in the art would clearly recognize that the "opposing shut-off surfaces of the valve body" recited in lines 8 and 9 are the same as the shut-off surfaces of the valve body that are "arranged to face away from each other." Shut-off surfaces that are arranged to face away from each other oppose each other. Hence, claim 15 is not indefinite because it recites "the opposing shut-off surfaces of the valve body."

The allegation in the Office Action that there is insufficient antecedent basis for "the outlet that opposes the free end of the actuator" in lines 10 and 11 of claim 15 is also erroneous when one considers Section 2173.05(e) of *The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure*. It is clear that the word "opposes" has the same meaning in

lines 10 and 11 of claim 15 as the word "opposite." In this regard, page 1270 of *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, *ibid.*, copy enclosed, defines "oppose" as "to place so as to be opposite something else." Thus, it is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that an outlet that opposes the free end of an actuator is an outlet that is opposite the free end of the actuator. In the specific embodiment of Figs. 1 and 2, outlet 32 is obviously opposite from, and therefore, opposes, the free end of actuator 50 on which sealing element 45 is mounted. Hence, claim 15 is not indefinite because it recites "the outlet that opposes the free end of the actuator."

The allegation in the Office Action that lines 8-11 of claim 15 require "both valve seats to narrow toward the one outlet" is incorrect. The recitation in lines 8 and 9 of claim 15 for "the opposing shut-off surfaces of the valve body narrowing conically" refers to the surfaces of valve seat 36 that are above and below axis 51 and which are engaged by surface 48 of sealing element 45. Hence, lines 8-11 of claim 15 are not inaccurate and indefinite.

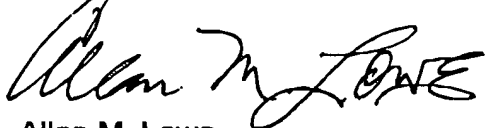
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested and deemed in order since no art has been applied against the claims and all formal matters under 35 USC 112, ¶2 have been addressed.

Serial No. 09/672,038

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures: *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Third edition, 1992, pages 1835 and 1270.



MARKED-UP VERSION SHOWING CHANGES:

15. (amended) A valve for liquid separation, especially for analytical or preparative liquid chromatography, comprising a valve body having an inlet and at least two outlets, a sealing element coupled with the inlet and outlets, the sealing element including shut-off surfaces for alternately shutting off the outlets, the shut-off surfaces including an arcuate segment, the shut-off surfaces respectively associated with the outlets being arranged to face away from each other, and being at a free end of an actuator, the opposing shut-off surfaces of the valve body narrowing conically or as a funnel toward the outlet that opposes the free end of the actuator, an outlet area being arranged between the opposing shut-off surfaces and an outlet channel, the outlet channel having a conically narrowing opening surface.

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**taos**<sup>1</sup> (tous, ts'òs) *n.* *pl.* **Taos**. 1. *a.* A Pueblo people located north-northeast of Santa Fe, New Mexico. *b.* A member of this people. 2. The Tannan language of the Taos people.

**taos**<sup>2</sup> (tous, ts'òs) *n.* 1. A town of northern New Mexico north-northeast of Santa Fe. It developed as an art colony after 1898 and has attracted many artists and writers, including John Marin and D.H. Lawrence. Population, 3,369. 2. A pueblo of northern New Mexico northeast of the town of Taos. Population, 1,030.

**tap**<sup>1</sup> (táp) *v.* **tapped, tap-ping, taps.** — *tr.* 1. To strike gently with a light blow or blows. *I tapped you on the shoulder to get your attention.* 2. To give a light tap with: *tap a pencil.* 3. To produce with a succession of light blows: *tap out a rhythm.* 4. To select, as for membership in an organization; designate. See Synonyms at **appoint**. 5. *a.* To repair (shoe heels or toes) by applying a thin layer of leather or a substitute material. *b.* To attach metal plates to (shoe toes or heels). — *intr.* 1. To deliver a gentle, light blow or blows. 2. To walk making light clicks. — **tap** *n.* 1. *a.* A gentle blow. *b.* The sound made by such a blow. 2. *a.* A thin layer of leather or a substitute applied to a worn-down shoe heel or toe. *b.* A metal plate attached to the toe or heel of a shoe, as for tap-dancing. [Middle English *tappen*, possibly from Old French *taper*.]

**tap**<sup>2</sup> (táp) *n.* 1. A valve and spout used to regulate delivery of a fluid at the end of a pipe. 2. A plug for a bunghole; a spigot. 3. *a.* Liquor drawn from a spigot. *b.* Liquor of a particular brew, cask, or quality. 4. *Medicine.* The removal of fluid from a body cavity: a spinal tap. 5. A tool for cutting an internal screw thread. 6. A makeshift terminal in an electric circuit. — **tap** *v.* **tapped, tap-ping, taps.** 1. To furnish with a spigot or tap. 2. To pierce in order to draw off liquid: *tap a maple tree.* 3. To draw (liquid) from a vessel or container: *tap a new keg of beer.* 4. *Medicine.* To withdraw fluid from (a body cavity). 5. To make a connection with or open outlets from: *tap a water main.* 6. *a.* To wiretap (a telephone). *b.* To establish an electric connection in (a power line), as to divert current secretly. 7. To cut screw threads in (a collar, socket, or other fitting). 8. *Informal.* To ask (a person) for money. — *Idiom.* **on tap.** 1. Ready to be drawn; in a tapped cask: *beer on tap.* 2. Available for immediate use: *ready extra personnel on tap.* [Middle English *tappe*, from Old English *tappa*.]

**ta-pa** (tá'pə, tap'ə) *n.* 1. The inner bark of the paper mulberry. 2. A paperlike cloth made in the South Pacific islands by pounding this bark or similar bark. [Marquesan and Tahitian.]

**Tapa-jós** also **Ta-pa-jos** (táp'a-zhòs', ts'pə-) *n.* A river, about 965 km (600 mi) long, of northern Brazil flowing northeast to the Amazon River.

**tap dance** *n.* A dance in which the rhythm is sounded out by the clicking taps on the heels and toes of a dancer's shoes. — **tap dancer** *n.*

**tap-dance** (táp'dans') *intr.v.* **-danced, -danc-ing, -danc-es.** To perform a tap dance.

**tape** (táp) *n.* 1. A narrow strip of strong woven fabric, as that used in sewing or bookbinding. 2. A continuous narrow, flexible strip of cloth, metal, paper, or plastic, such as adhesive tape, magnetic tape, or ticker tape. 3. A string stretched across the finish line of a racetrack to be broken by the winner. 4. A tape recording. — **tape** *v.* **taped, tap-ing, tapes.** — *tr.* 1. *a.* To fasten, secure, strengthen, or wrap with a tape. *b.* To bind together (the sections of a book) by applying strips of tape to it. 2. To measure with a tape measure. 3. To record sounds or pictures on magnetic tape. — *intr.* To make a recording on magnetic tape. [Middle English, from Old English *tæppe*.] — **tape'a-ble** *adj.* — **tape'-less** *adj.*

**tape cartridge** *n.* A cartridge containing an endless loop of magnetic tape and designed for automatic use on insertion into a compatible sound or video recorder or computer system.

**tape deck** *n.* A tape recorder and player having no built-in amplifiers or speakers, used as a component in an audio system.

**tape grass** *n.* See **eelgrass**.

**tape-line** (táp'lin') *n.* See **tape measure**.

**tape measure** *n.* A tape of cloth, paper, or steel marked off in a linear scale, as of inches or centimeters, for taking measurements. Also called **tape-line**.

**ta-pé-nade** (ts'pə nād') *n.* A spread of Provençal origin consisting of capers, black olives, and anchovies purged with olive oil. [French, from Provençal *tapéno*, capers, perhaps ultimately of Arabic origin.]

**tape player** *n.* A self-contained machine for playing back recorded magnetic tapes.

**ta-per** (ts'pər) *n.* 1. A small or very slender candle. 2. A long wax-coated wick used to light candles or gas lamps. 3. A source of feeble light. 4. *a.* A gradual decrease in thickness or width of an elongated object. *b.* A gradual decrease, as in action or force. — **ta-per** *v.* **-pered, -per-ing, -pers.** — *intr.* 1. To become gradually narrower or thinner toward one end. 2. To diminish or lessen gradually. Often used with *off*: *The storm finally tapered off.* — *tr.* 1. To make thinner or narrower at one end. 2. To make smaller gradually. — **ta-per** *adj.* Gradually decreasing in size toward a point. [Middle English, from Old English *tapor*, possibly ultimately from Latin *papyrus*, *papyrus* (sometimes used for candle-wicks). See **PAPER**.] — **ta-per-ing-ly** *adv.*

**tape-re-cord** (táp'rē kōrd') *v.* **-cord-ed, -cord-ing, -cords.** To record on magnetic tape.

**tape recorder** *n.* A mechanical device for recording on magnetic tape and usually for playing back the recorded material.

**tape recording** *n.* 1. *a.* A magnetic tape on which sound or visual images have been recorded. *b.* The material recorded on a magnetic tape. 2. The act of recording on magnetic tape.

**tap-es-try** (táp'ī-strē) *n.* *pl.* **-tries.** 1. A heavy cloth woven with rich, often varicolored designs or scenes, usually hung on walls for decoration and sometimes used to cover furniture. 2. Something felt to resemble a richly and complexly designed cloth: *the tapestry of world history.* — **tapestry** *tr.v.* **-es-try, -es-try-ing, -es-tries** (táp'ī-strē). 1. To hang or decorate with tapestry. 2. To make, weave, or depict in a tapestry. [Middle English *tapicere*, *tapetri*, from Old French *tapiserie*, from *tapiser*, to cover with carpet, from *tapis*, carpet, from Greek *tapeion*, diminutive of *tapēs*, perhaps of Iranian origin.]

**ta-pe-tum** (ts-pē'təm) *n.* *pl.* **-ta** (ts). 1. *Botany.* A nutritive tissue within the sporangium, particularly within an anther. 2. *Anatomy.* *a.* A membranous layer or region, especially the iridescent membrane of the choroid of certain mammals. *b.* A layer of fibers of the corpus callosum forming the roof of part of the lateral ventricle of the brain. [Medieval Latin *tapetum*, coverlet, from Latin *tapēte*, *tapetum*, from Greek *tapes*, *tapetō*. See **TAP-ESTRY**.] — **ta-pe'tal** (ts-pē'tl) *adj.*

**tape-worm** (táp'wōrm') *n.* Any of various ribbonlike, often very long flatworms of the class Cestoda, that lack an alimentary canal and are parasitic in the intestines of vertebrates, including human beings.

**ta-phon-o-my** (ts-fōn'ə-mē) *n.* 1. The study of the conditions and processes by which organisms become fossilized. 2. The conditions and processes of fossilization. [Greek *taphe*, grave + *nomos*.] — **ta-phon'o-mic** (ts-fōn'ə-nōm'ik) *adj.* — **ta-phon'o-mist** *n.*

**tap house** *n.* A tavern or bar.

**tap-i-o-co** (táp'ē-ō'kō) *n.* A brady starch obtained from the root of the cassava, used for puddings and as a thickening agent in cooking. [Portuguese, from Tupi *typioca*: *ty*, juice + *pya*, heart + *oca*, to remove.]

**ta-pir** (ts'pər, ts-pir') *n.* Any of several large, chiefly nocturnal, odd-toed ungulates of the genus *Tapirus* of tropical America, the Malay Peninsula, and Sumatra, related to the horse and the rhinoceros, and having a heavy body, short legs, and a long, fleshy, flexible upper lip. [Perhaps French, ultimately from Tupi *tapira*, *tapir*.]

**tap-is** (táp'ē, táp'is, ts-pē') *n.* *Obsolete.* Tapestry or comparable material used for draperies, carpeting, and furniture covering. — *Idiom.* **on the tapis.** Under consideration. [Middle English, from Old French. See **TAPESTRY**.]

**tap-off** (táp'ōf', -ōf') *n.* Basketball. See **tip-off**<sup>2</sup>.

**Tap-pan** (táp'an), Arthur, 1786-1865, American merchant and abolitionist. With his brother Lewis (1788-1874) he founded the American Anti-Slavery Society (1833).

**Tappan Zee** (zē). A widening of the Hudson River in southeast New York. Maj. John André was hanged for treason in 1780 at the nearby village of Tappan.

**tap-per** (táp'ər) *n.* One that taps.

**tap-pet** (táp'it) *n.* A lever or projecting arm that moves or is moved by contact with another part, usually to communicate a certain motion, as between a driving mechanism and a valve. [Probably from **TAP**.]

**tap-ping** (táp'ing) *n.* 1. *a.* The act of one that taps. *b.* The process or means by which something is tapped. 2. Something that is taken or drawn by tapping.

**tap-pit-hen** (táp'it-hén') *n.* *Scots.* 1. A crested hen. 2. A large mug with a knobbed lid. [Scots *tappit*, crested (variant of *tapped*, past participle of **TAP**) + *HEX*.]

**tap-room** (táp'rōm', -rōm') *n.* A bar or barroom.

**tap-root** (táp'rōt', -rōt') *n.* The main root of a plant, usually stouter than the lateral roots and growing straight downward from the stem.

**taps** (taps) *pl.n.* (used with a sing. or pl. verb). A bugle call or drum signal sounded at night, as at a military camp, as an order to put out lights and also sounded at military funerals and memorial services. [Perhaps alteration of *tapton*, Latin variant of **TATTOO**.]

**tap-ster** (táp'stər) *n.* One who draws and serve liquor for customers; a bartender.

**tap water** *n.* Water drawn directly from a tap or faucet.

**tar**<sup>1</sup> (tār) *n.* 1. A dark, oily, viscous material, consisting mainly of hydrocarbons, produced by the destructive distillation of organic substances such as wood, coal, or peat. 2. Coal tar. 3. A solid residue of tobacco smoke containing byproducts of combustion. — **tar** *tr.v.* **tarred, tar-ring, tars.** To coat with or as if with tar. — *Idiom.* **tar and feather.** 1. To punish (a person) by covering with tar and feathers. 2. To criticize severely and devastatingly; excoriate. [Middle English, from Old English *tera*. See **deru-** in Appendix.]

**tar**<sup>2</sup> (tār) *n.* *Informal.* A sailor. [Possibly short for **TARPAULIN**.]

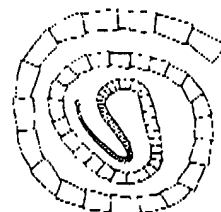
**Tar-a** (tār'ə). A village of eastern Ireland northwest of Dublin. It was the seat of Irish kings until the sixth century.

**tar-a-did-dle** (tār'ə-dīd'l) *n.* Variant of **taradiddle**.

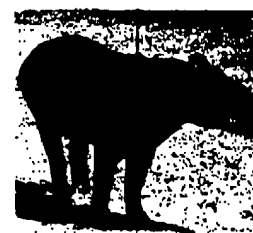
**Ta-ra-hu-ma-ra** (ts'ə-hūm-mə'ə, ts'ə-) *n.* *pl.* **Tarahumara** or **-ras**. 1. A member of a Native American people of



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portunity for broader experience when it appears" (Eleanor Roosevelt). Occasion suggests the proper time for action: "Who would do ill ne'er wants [lacks] occasion" (George Herbert). I seized the occasion to set the record straight. An opening is an opportunity affording a good possibility of success: The lawyer waited patiently for her opening, then exposed the inconsistency in the testimony. Chance often implies an opportunity that arises through luck or accident: This is a chance for the two of you to get acquainted. Don't throw this chance away; it won't come around again. A break is an often sudden piece of luck, especially good luck: When the star was taken ill, the understudy finally got her first big break. "The best you get is an even break" (Franklin P. Adams).

**op·pos·a·ble** (ə-pōz'ə-həl) *adj.* 1. Possible to oppose or resist. 2. That can be placed opposite something else: The thumb is an opposable digit. — **op·pos·a·bil·i·ty** *n.*

**op·pose** (ə-pōz') *v.* **-posed, -pos·ing, -pos·es.** — *tr.* 1. To be in contention or conflict with: oppose the enemy force. 2. To be resistant to: opposes new ideas. 3. To place opposite in contrast or counterbalance. 4. To place so as to be opposite something else. — *intr.* To act or be in opposition. [Middle English *opposen*, to question, interrogate, from Old French *opposer*, alteration (influenced by *poser*, to place; see *pose*) of Latin *oppōnere*, to oppose (*ob-*, against; see *ob-* + *ponere*, to put; see *apo-* in Appendix).] — **op·pos·er** *n.*

**SYNONYMS:** oppose, fight, combat, resist, withstand, contest. These verbs are compared as they mean to set someone or something in opposition to another, as in an effort to overcome or defeat. Oppose has the fewest connotations: oppose a legislative bill; was opposed to nuclear reactors. "The idea is inconsistent with our constitutional theory and has been stubbornly opposed . . . since the early days of the Republic" (E.L. White). Fight and combat suggest vigor and aggressiveness: fight corruption; combating disease. "All my life I have fought against prejudice and intolerance" (Harry S. Truman). "We are not afraid . . . to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it" (Thomas Jefferson). To resist is to strive to fend off or offset the actions, effects, or force of: "Pardon was freely extended to all who had resisted the invasion" (John R. Green). "My servants . . . resisted the adoption of this plan" (A.W. Kinglake). Withstand often implies successful resistance: "Neither the southern provinces, nor Sicily, could have withstood his power" (Henry Hallam). To contest is to call something into question and take an active stand against it: I don't contest your right to dispose of your property as you see fit, but I doubt the propriety of this bequest.

**op·po·site** (əp'ə-zīt) *adj.* **Abbr. opp.** 1. Placed or located directly across from something else or from each other: opposite sides of a building. 2. Facing the other way; moving or tending away from each other: opposite directions. 3. Altogether different, as in nature, quality, or significance: The effect of the medication was opposite to that intended. 4. Botany. Growing in pairs on either side of a stem: opposite leaves. — **opposite** *n.* 1. One that is opposite or contrary to another. 2. An opponent or antagonist. 3. An antonym. — **opposite** *adv.* In an opposite position: They sat opposite at the table. — **opposite** *prep.* 1. Across from or facing: parked the car opposite the bank. 2. In a complementary dramatic role to: He played opposite her. [Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *oppōsitus*, past participle of *oppōnere*, oppose. See *oppose*.] — **op·po·site·ly** *adv.* — **op·po·site·ness** *n.*

**SYNONYMS:** opposite, contrary, antithetical, contradictory. These adjectives mean marked by a natural or innate and irreconcilable opposition. Two things that are altogether different are opposite: Antonyms are words of opposite meaning. "It is said that opposite characters make a union happiest" (Charles Reade). Contrary stresses extreme divergence: Democrats and Republicans often hold contrary opinions. Antithetical emphasizes diametrical opposition: She engaged in practices entirely antithetical to her professed beliefs. Contradictory implies denial or inconsistency: "contradictory attributes of unjust justice and loving vindictiveness" (John Morley).

**opposite number** *n.* A person who holds a position in an organization or a system that corresponds to that of a person in another organization or system, a counterpart: "had a face-to-face . . . conference with his opposite number at the American Embassy" (Frederick Forsyth).

**op·po·si·tion** (əp'ə-zish'ən) *n.* 1. a. The act of opposing or resisting. b. The condition of being in conflict, antagonism: "The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself" (Virginia Woolf). 2. Placement opposite to or in contrast with another. 3. Something that serves as an obstacle. 4. Often **Opposition**. A political party or an organized group opposed to the group, party, or government in power. 5. Astronomy. a. The position of two celestial bodies when their longitude differs by 180°, especially a configuration in which the earth lies on a straight line between the sun and a superior planet or the moon. b. The position of the superior planet or the moon in this configuration. 6. Logic. The relation existing between two propositions having an identical subject and predicate but differing in quantity, quality, or both. 7. Linguistics. Contrast in a language

between two phonemes or other linguistically important units. — **op·po·si·tion·al** *adj.*

**op·po·si·tion·ist** (əp'ə-zish'ə-nist) *n.* A member of an opposition. — **op·po·si·tion·ist** *adj.*

**op·press** (ə-prēs') *tr.v.* **-pressed, -press·ing, -press·es.** To keep down by severe and unjust use of force or to oppress people who were oppressed by tyranny. 2. To weigh down: Poverty oppresses the spirit. 3. Obsolete. To overwhelm: (Middle English *oppressen*, from Old French *oppresser*, from Latin *oppression-*, from *oppressus*, past participle of *opprimere*, to oppress, to press; see *per-* in Appendix). — **op·pres·sor** *n.*

**op·pres·sion** (ə-prēsh'ən) *n.* 1. a. The act of oppressing; arbitrary and cruel exercise of power: "There can be no just system of oppression . . . without the consent of the oppressed" (Florence K. Kennedy). b. The state of being oppressed. 2. Something that oppresses. 3. A feeling of being weighed down in mind or body.

**op·pres·sive** (ə-prēs'iv) *adj.* 1. Difficult to bear: oppressive laws. 2. Exercising power arbitrarily and unjustly; tyrannical. 3. Weighing heavily on the mind: oppressive weather. See Synonyms at *burdensome*. — **op·pres·sive·ly** *adv.* — **op·pres·sive·ness** *n.*

**op·pro·bri·ous** (ə-prō'brē-əs) *adj.* 1. Expressing blatant reproach; scornful or abusive: opprobrious epithets. Bringing disgrace, shameful or infamous: opprobrious conduct. — **op·pro·bri·ous·ly** *adv.*

**op·pro·bri·um** (ə-prō'brē-am) *n.* 1. Disgrace and exceedingly shameful conduct; ignominy. See Synonyms at *disgrace*. 2. Scornful reproach or contempt: a term of opprobrium. 3. A cause of shame or disgrace. [Latin, from *opprobri-*, reproach; *ob-* against; see *ob-* + *probum*, reproach; see Appendix.]

**op·pugn** (ə-pyŋn') *tr.v.* **-pugned, -pugn·ing, -pugns.** To oppose, contradict, or call into question. [Middle English *oppugn*, from Latin *oppugnare*, to attack; *ob-* against; *pugnare*, to fight with the fist; see *peuk-* in Appendix.] — **op·pugn·er** *n.*

**op·sin** (əp'sin) *n.* A protein of the retina, especially a constituent of rhodopsin, that makes up one of the visual pigments. [Probably back-formation from *rhodopsin*.]

**-opsis** *suff.* Something resembling a specified thing: [Greek, sight, seeing, like, from *opsis*, sight, appearance; see Appendix.]

**op·son·ic** (əp'son'ik) *adj.* Of, relating to, or producing. [OPSON (IN) + -IC.]

**op·so·nin** (əp'sə-nin) *n.* An antibody in blood that causes bacteria or other foreign cells to become more susceptible to the action of phagocytes. [Latin *opsonare*, to buy; from Greek *opsōnaim*, from *opson*, condiment, delicacy.]

**op·so·nize** (əp'sə-nīz') *tr.v.* **-nized, -niz·ing, -nizes.** To make (bacteria or other cells) more susceptible to the action of phagocytes. [From OPSONIN.] — **op·so·niz·a·tion** *n.*

**-opsy** *suff.* Examination; biopsy. [Greek *-opsis*, from *opsis*. See *ok-* in Appendix.]

**opt** (əpt) *intr.v.* **opt·ed, opt·ing, opt·s.** To make a decision: opted for early retirement; opted not to go. **verb. opt out.** Slang. To choose not to participate in: "give individual schools the right to opt out of the national authority" (Newsweek). [French *opter*, from Latin *optare*.]

**opt.** *abbr.* 1. Grammar. Optative. 2. Optical; optics. 3. Optimum. 4. Optional.

**op·ta·tive** (əp'tə-tiv) *adj.* 1. Expressing a wish or desire. **Abbr. opt.** Grammar. a. Of, relating to, or being a mood in some languages, such as Greek, used to express a wish. Designating a statement using a verb in the subjunctive mood to indicate a wish or desire, as in *Had I the means, I would go.* — **optative** *n.* **Abbr. opt.** Grammar. 1. The optative. A verb or an expression in the optative mood. [Middle English *optatif*, from Old French, from Late Latin *optativus*, past participle of *optare*, to wish.] — **opt·a·tive·ly** *adv.*

**op·tic** (əptik) *adj.* 1. Of or relating to the eye or eyes. 2. Of or relating to the science of optics or optical equipment. *n.* 1. An eye. 2. Any of the lenses, prisms, or other optical instrument. [Middle English *oprik*, from Old French, from Medieval Latin *opticus*, from Greek *optikos*, visible. See *ok-* in Appendix.]

**op·ti·cal** (əp'ti-kul) *adj.* **Abbr. opt.** 1. Of or relating to light: an optical defect. 2. Designed to assist sight: optical instruments. 3. Of or relating to optics. 4. Relating to visible light: optical astronomy. 5. Using light: optical communication. — **op·ti·cal·ly** *adv.*

**optical activity** *n.* Chemistry. A property of a chiral molecule that enables a substance to rotate the plane of incident polarized light.

**optical art** *n.* Op art.

**optical character reader** *n.* **Abbr. OCR.** A device used for optical character recognition.

**optical character recognition** *n.* **Abbr. OCR.**

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